

Don't Catch that Cold!

Modified with permission from *Fish Iowa! A Teaching Module*, Iowa DNR

Overview:

Students notice differences in water temperature by placing their hands in water of different temperatures.

Associated Objectives:

- ☐ Students will become familiar with basic safety and dress guidelines for canoeing and kayaking.
- ☐ Students will become familiar with ways to prevent hypothermia.

Time:

20 – 45 minutes

Materials:

Large containers holding water of various temperatures (e.g., 80°, 70°, 60°, 50°), thermometer(s), towels

Directions:

Refer to “Other Safety Tips – Hypothermia” in the **Safety** section of the *Background Information* for more information about hypothermia. Have volunteers place their hands in each container of water, starting with the warmest and ending with the coolest. Allow time between containers for hands to warm up. Have students imagine their entire body in water that temperature.

Ask students:

Can you get hypothermia in water this temperature?

How long do you think you can stay in ____° water before hypothermia sets in?

Discuss how hypothermia can strike in any water temperature. (See the “Hypothermia Chart” in the *Background Information*.)

What are some symptoms of hypothermia?

Discuss/demonstrate how to assume the *huddle* and *H.E.L.P.* positions. Discuss other ways to prevent hypothermia as well as immediate treatment of hypothermia.

Evaluation:

Students should be able to successfully identify symptoms of hypothermia and ways to prevent it. Students should realize hypothermia can occur at any time of year in water at any temperature.

Extensions:

See if students can keep their hands in the waters of different temperatures for one or more minutes (watch for redness, numbness, and burning sensations in cooler temperatures).